DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 415 337 CE 075 205

AUTHOR Legaspi, Perla E.
TITLE The Academe in the Promotion of Adult Literacy.
PUB DATE 1997-05-00
NOTE 8p.; Paper presented at the Asia Literacy Regional Forum (Manila, Philippines, May 5-9, 1997).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; *Adult Literacy; Community Development; Cooperative Programs; Coordination; Developing Nations; *Distance Education; Educational Cooperation; Educational Development; Educational Needs; Educational Research; *Extension Education; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Illiteracy; *Literacy Education; *Nonformal Education; *Universities
IDENTIFIERS *Philippines

ABSTRACT

The delivery of literacy services by state universities in the Philippines is embedded in their academic functions of instruction/teaching, research and development, consultancy, and extension services. To reach a larger clientele and democratize access to education, the University of the Philippines (UP) has established the Open University. The Philippine Normal University has a developed a comprehensive development plan for the second district of Negros Occidental region with the following components that promote adult literacy: Nonformal Education for the Out-of-School Youth, Nonformal Education for Adults, and Continuing and Lifelong Education Program. UP has a very strong extension program. Among the services under this volunteer program that relate to the promotion of adult literacy are the following: Affirmative Action Program; Pinatubo Rehabilitation and Resettlement Program; Ecology Camp; Coastal Resource Management Program; Service Learning; Tutorial Program; Community Empowerment Program; Training and Technical Assistance Programs; and Farmer Scientist Program. Through its Education Research Program, UP is involved in the conceptualization and operationalization of the Comprehensive Education and Community Development Program of Valencia, Negros Oriental, a joint program intended to respond to all the education needs of the locality by articulating all education and training programs and linking them to municipal development and plans and programs. (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 415 337

The Academe in the Promotion of Adult Literacy

Dr. Perla E. Legaspi
College of Public Administration,
University of the Philippines

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Manila, Philippines
May 5-9, 1997

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
P Legaspi
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

CE 075 205

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

THE ACADEME IN THE PROMOTION OF ADULT LITERACY

Dr. Perla E. Legaspi

Introduction

The globalization trend and the rapidly changing market economy compels every nation to continuously and vigorously develop and upgrade the skills; knowledge and values of its human resources in order to stay relevant and competitive in the 21st century which is characterized as an era of knowledge explosion. To developed countries, the continuous development and upgrading of human capacities is not a formidable task but to a developing country like the Philippines where a significant portion of its population is incapacitated to participate in nation building by virtue of the illiteracy malaise, the task is indeed a daunting one.

Efforts of the national government to eradicate illiteracy as a barrier to human development seem to be just a drop in the bucket considering the complexity and scope of the problem. Researches reveal that it would take so many years for the national government to address the problem but if a concerted effort among government, non-government and other sectors of the society will come into play, it would not take that long to solve the illiteracy problem. Given this reality, the present administration declared it a policy to eradicate illiteracy within the framework of shared responsibility. This means that everybody--the national and local governments, the non-government entities, the private sector and the community at large- is mandated to participate in the crusade to fight illiteracy.

It is within this perspective that the participation of the universities and other educational tertiary institutions is examined.

The Academe's Involvement in Education and Adult Literacy

This paper discusses the efforts of the academic sector in promoting adult literacy. It describes what the state universities and colleges are doing in this particular field and how they forge linkages with government, non-government and the private sector in the course of literacy service delivery.

While tertiary educational institutions are more popularly known to provide formal education geared towards the needs of the while collar job market, they are also engaged invariably in the delivery of non-forma education or literacy promotion. In fact, it has become an integral part of

their mission to provide quality non-formal education in the service of the nation.

The literacy service delivery of the universities is imbedded in their academic functions of instruction/teaching, research and development, consultancy as well as in their extension services.

A. Literacy Promotion in Instruction

Promoting literacy is not confined within the four walls of the classroom. To reach a larger clientele and democratize access to education, the academe came up with some mechanisms of achieving these goals. An innovation along this line was the opening of the so-called Open University by the University of the Philippines. The strength of this kind of education lies in its open nature. Individuals from all over the country who cannot attend the traditional classroom schooling are given the opportunity to pursue higher learning via the Open University. Presently, the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) offers graduate programs only. However, it will also soon offer undergraduate programs which is expected to increase tremendously the number of clients served by the University.

The potential of the UPOU in contributing to the improvement of the quality and access to education in the country is recognized by the government and hence, it was given a substantial increase in its annual budget.

B. Literacy Promotion in Research, Development and Publication

Literacy promotion is also strong in the research and development activities of the academe. The Philippine Normal University (PNU) for one, has developed a comprehensive development plan for the second district of Negros Occidental with components that promote adult literacy.

One of the components of PNU's development plan is the Non-Formal Education for the Out-of-School Youth (OSY) which aims to assess the potential of OSY to re-enter school or to acquire entrepreneurial and employable skills through training programs.

Another component is focused on Non-Formal Education for Adults. Pilot programs designed to promote literacy and livelihood activities for disadvantaged female adults in undeserved areas have been developed under this component.

Also forming part of PNU's comprehensive plan is the component on Continuing and Lifelong Education Program which aims to enhance the skills as well as impart new skills (e.g. computer literacy) among personnel of government and non-government organizations in the said area.

C. Literacy Promotion in Extension Services

State universities like the University of the Philippines, has a very strong extension program. Its extension program is a solid proof of its commitment to serve the nation by reaching out to as many clients as possible especially those in the underserved provinces of the country.

1. The Ugnayan ng Pahinungod/Oblation Corps (UP/OC)

The Ugnayan ng Pahinungod/Oblation Corps of the University of the Philippines is the centerpriece of its extension program. It is also known as the volunteer service program since it is strongly rooted in the concept of voluntarism. Volunteers (Pahinungod fellows) from among the students, faculty, staff and alumni of the University form the care of those who deliver various services to meet the needs of the people. Service delivery is done by the volunteers themselves or in collaboration/partnership with other government, non-government and people's organizations.

Among the services under this program which relate directly or indirectly do the promotion of adult literacy and literacy is general are the following:

a. *Affirmative Action Program.* This is actually in line with the school's policy of democratizing access to education in this premier University. Through the volunteers, the bright high school seniors from selected schools in provinces underrepresented in UP (e.g. Kalinga, Apayao, Mindoro Oriental, Masbate, Bohol, Western Samar, Zamboanga del Sur, Agusan del Sur, Davao Oriental, Sultan Kudarat, Sulu) are given training in basic courses such as English, Mathematics and Science to hone their basic skills in these subjects so that they can have better chances of passing the entrace examinations (UPCAT) required by the University. Those who get accepted into the University are also given a bridge course on same subjects since these subjects are normally found difficult by freshmen coming from the provinces. Included in this course is a module in Learning to Learn.

b. *Pinatubo Rehabilitation and Resettlement Program.* This involves a focused and comprehensive assistance to the families of lahar victims in an adopted community by the UP/OC. It aims to help them move

closer to normalcy through economic self-sufficiency and psycho-social stability. It is in the area of self-sufficiency where functional literacy skills are taught such as the skills in entrepreneurship and cooperative development.

c. *Ecology Camp*. This is an immersion of individuals, students, groups, movements and organizations through experiential learning in camping to raise community consciousness and mobilize people for the protection and preservation of the

environment. Here, the camp volunteers and the host community collaborate in the conduct of camp programs. This is done through an active social investigation of the community's needs and direct consultation with the community members. The ecology camp sites in various communities. Environmental protection is operationalized by cleaning the surroundings, tree planting, development of community, environmental programs and direct political intervention through a collective campaign against logging and other forms of environmental destruction.

d. *Coastal Resource Management Program*. This is also designed to enhance environmental consciousness of the community where the program is implemented (Taklong Island, Guimaras). Some learning activities of the program include value formation and leadership training for the rural women of the adopted community, the facilitation of networking among fisherfolks and an introduction to mangrove planting for the students of a rural agricultural college.

e. *Service Learning*. This integrates learning with social service. It is premised on the principle that education should not be confined in the classroom and that knowledge, attitudes and skills are enriched and strengthened through the interaction with people and the practice of one's theoretical knowledge.

f. *Tutorial Program*. This program sends volunteers to selected public elementary schools to assist teachers through tutorial services for slow learners. This is operationalized in coordination with the selected schools through a Memorandum of Agreement.

g. *Community Empowerment Program*. This is a capability building program in five barangays of a municipality in Iloilo. Its aim is to institutionalize people empowerment by enhancing the knowledge and skills of municipal development workers to respond to the development problems and needs of the communities. Again, this program is done in coordination with the Municipal Government League of the province of Iloilo.

h. *Training and Technical Assistance Programs.* Skill training on various livelihood projects and technical assistance projects are provided to communities, cooperative, NGOs and various government agencies in the Visayas by the UP/OC. In particular, the assistance program include survey researches, food processing training, federation of primary cooperatives, design and installation of accounting system and participatory development training for community. Technical assistance is also delivered to some agrarian reform communities where the farmers are given opportunities to undergo training in rice growing and related topics as an offshoot of the coordinative linkages forged by the staff volunteers with the Philippine Rice Research Institute and other relevant organizations engaged in developing and improving rice technology.

I. *Farmer Scientist Program.* This is another collaborative program which aims to equip the hillyland farmer-beneficiaries with adequate knowledge and technologies on contour farming in a corn-based cropping system and to strengthen the research and extension capabilities of state colleges and local government units in the project sites (Cebu and Bohol).

2. Other Extension Programs

The University of the Philippines through its Education Research Program is also involved in the conceptualization and operationalization of the Comprehensive Education and Community Development Program of the municipality of Valencia, Negros Oriental. This program which is the first of its kind in the country, is a joint program of the municipality, the University, the DECS and the LCC. It is intended to respond to all the education needs of the locality by articulating all education and training programs and linking these to municipal development and plans and programs.

The aforecited programs are just some of the various exposures of the University in different communities of the country.

Like the UP, the PNU has some extension programs which are related to the promotion of literacy. The PNU, in cooperation with the Philippine Association of University Women (PAUW), conducts livelihood skills training among mothers in selected depressed areas.

Moreover, the PNU is also committed in empowering women by developing their leadership roles in the community through its outreach program. Among the training foci are Leadership, Program Implementation

and Livelihood cum Literacy. Again, this outreach program is made possible through the assistance of a cause-oriented group which is the PAUW.

Summary and Concluding Remarks

The discussion above provides a snapshot of the literacy promotion activities of the academe. The broad range of their services/activities and their efforts in linking up with non-academic institutions (government, non-government, people's organizations, etc.) in the course of delivering literacy-related services, debunk the notion that universities are mere ivory towers. Their literacy initiatives especially in their outreach or extension programs are all commendable for their relevance to the needs of the communities that they serve and the practical uses of their services.

The academe is expected to continue what it has started in the movement to promote adult literacy and perhaps even step up its literacy efforts in the years to come. And if all the other sectors would do their share in this undertaking, the problem of illiteracy would just be a thing in the past. By then, the country would be in a better position to complete with the rest of the world.